

President M. Roy Wilson
Wayne State University
Testimony to Michigan Legislature
February 29, 2016

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

You have asked that we address one of three topics, and we would like to address the topic of our “efforts to foster collaboration to strengthen regional assets.”

As Michigan’s only public, urban, research university, Wayne State has a distinctive mission. This mission:

“To create and advance knowledge, prepare a diverse student body to thrive, and positively impact local and global communities”...

...forms the heart of our recently completed strategic plan.

Our efforts to foster collaboration to strengthen regional assets relate directly to our stated mission. Wayne State is located in the heart of a city that has emerged from near collapse and is in the early stages of a remarkable transformation. There is much good news to share on this front, but success is not a given. The good news is balanced with daunting challenges, like Detroit’s public schools, and neighborhoods, and members of the community who have yet to feel the positive effects of this turnaround.

The impact of our university starts in the city, but it extends well beyond the borders of the city as well. We collaborate in many ways and with many organizations throughout the city, region and State for the sake of our students and citizens. Here are just a few examples of such partnerships:

- Wayne State has helped attract and retain more than 1,600 Midtown residents as part of Live Midtown, a partnership between Wayne State, the nonprofit Midtown Inc., our award-winning Studio One mixed-use development that opened in 2008, and our fellow anchor institutions—Detroit Medical Center and Henry Ford Health System. Through philanthropic dollars, Wayne State is a major investor in the new M-1 light rail line serving greater downtown.
- And we are a key partner in Detroit Bike Share, which originated in our Office of Economic Development and will launch within the next year in partnership with MDOT and the Downtown Detroit Partnership.
- New businesses are moving in and thriving thanks to support from **Wayne State’s police department**. Our highly trained police force keeps our campus safe by patrolling Midtown in coordination with Detroit and other law enforcement agencies that include the County and State police, the FBI and Homeland Security. Using a statistical analysis

of crime called “Compstat,” we’ve been able to lower serious crime by more than 50 percent over the past seven years, making students, residents, and businesses feel safe enough to live, learn, work, and play in Midtown.

- More specifically, since 2013, 140 new businesses have opened in Midtown and 74,000 square-feet of commercial space are currently under development. Those businesses will tell you they would not be here if they didn’t feel the neighborhood was safe – safety they feel because of Wayne State’s police department.
- We partner with Goldman Sachs on the **10,000 Small Businesses** program, a \$500 million investment across the US and UK to help second-stage small businesses grow and create jobs. To date, 195 businesses have been supported throughout Southeast Michigan and many more are in process.
- Another way we collaborate to directly impact Michigan’s economy is through **Pure Michigan Business Connect**, the MEDC’s program to encourage purchasing from Michigan suppliers. We also participate in **D2D**, a similar Detroit program with the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation. Although our reach is global, a significant majority of our spending is intentionally right here in Michigan. During the construction of our new Integrative Biosciences Building, for example (which was partially supported by Capital Outlay funding), our efforts to spend locally resulted in a total of more than \$240 million being poured into the Michigan economy over 2013 and 2014. Leveraging private philanthropic funds, we expect our new Mike Ilitch School of Business project will bring similar benefits to our local and State economy.
- Our affiliated nonprofit business incubator, **TechTown Detroit**, has served nearly 1,600 companies in the last eight years, from high-tech startups to neighborhood coffee shops. These businesses have created more than 1,200 jobs and raised more than \$120 million in capital.
- Another great example of collaboration that supports regional assets is the **University Research Corridor**, or URC, which, as you know, is the consortium of Wayne State, Michigan State, and the University of Michigan. This “regional asset” has an economic impact of more than \$17 billion, while helping drive the economy in other ways. For example, we conduct more than \$2 billion in research – much of that federally funded – helping to attract talent and creativity that results in a “brain gain,” rather than a brain drain. URC graduates have been shown to possess a high propensity towards entrepreneurship, and are creating businesses in Michigan. The URC drives commercialization of new technologies, and has a strong presence in many important Michigan industries, like automotive, health science, and water.
- Wayne State is investing in improving its ties with community colleges in the region, too. **Wayne Advantage-Macomb** is a strategic partnership between Macomb Community College and WSU to allow students to dually enroll and freely move back and forth between the two institutions. Under this program, a student can be taking a general education course at Macomb and a course in his or her major at WSU during the same

semester, which can save them considerable time. Hundreds of students are already taking classes on both campuses, and this program enables them to do it in a formal and coordinated way, and gives them access to additional resources like coordinated advising and financial aid at both institutions concurrently. Also, in partnership with **Schoolcraft College** (called **Schoolcraft to U**), Wayne State is offering business, computer science, and engineering technology classes on Schoolcraft’s campus along with joint advising and coordinated student services. The beauty of these collaborations is that each institution can achieve important educational goals without resorting to expensive “mission creep.”

- We also collaborate with **Oakland University** to streamline the process for Oakland students seeking a **Wayne Law degree**. Students are able to earn both a bachelor’s degree and a law degree in six years, which traditionally takes seven. With this agreement, students will transfer 30 credits from courses at the law school back to Oakland to meet bachelor’s degree requirements. So they get to shave a year off their studies and tuition, and start their careers a year earlier. Another example of how two universities can collaborate to achieve educational needs without each having to have their own individual program or school.

These are all great programs, but I think we would all agree that our most valuable regional “assets” are our people. As an urban university, we take seriously our obligation to serve the people in our community and State by drawing on our talent and assets.

- A collaborative effort among Detroit’s major colleges and universities is the **BUILD program**, which stands for Building Infrastructure Leading to Diversity. It is a nationwide program that is committed to ensuring that students from all backgrounds receive support during their educational experience to be able to pursue scientific research careers. This program is a consortium consisting of Wayne State, Marygrove College, and the University of Detroit-Mercy, which was awarded \$21.2 million by the NIH over five years to provide students with hands-on research training, guided career development, and access to a network of elite faculty mentors and renowned scientists. It focuses on teaching, research, and biomedical innovation that result in superior academic performance, higher graduation rates, decreased time to earn a degree and exciting career opportunities in cutting-edge, innovative scientific research. Our goals are aggressive: to have at least 75 percent of BUILD’s scholars graduate in 4 years with baccalaureate degrees in biomedical science-related fields and have 50 percent of those graduates matriculate into biomedical research doctoral programs.
- The revitalization of Detroit’s public education system is critical to Detroit’s overall comeback plan, and Wayne State has a number of programs that support this important task. One example is **TeachDETROIT**, funded in part by the Skillman Foundation. This program is designed to prepare new teachers who are interested in urban education. Coursework is integrated with field experiences in Detroit schools, and participants are mentored by experienced teachers with a history of successful practice in Detroit. Wayne State’s College of Education will train new teachers to work in Detroit schools as part of the new initiative.

- Another example of our collaboration with DPS is our participation in **Building Healthy Communities**. This project is a collaboration between Wayne State University, the University of Michigan, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, the United Dairy Industry of Michigan, and the Michigan Fitness Foundation. The goal of the project is to facilitate healthy transformations in schools throughout Michigan. Our Center for School Health leads the elementary school program, which seeks to infuse healthy eating and physical activity opportunities throughout the school to help children lead healthier lives and improve their school success. Since 2009, the project has facilitated healthy transformations in more than 30 Detroit schools, and more than 100 schools statewide, while compiling an enormous body of research documenting its impact with schools and children.
- For decades, Wayne State University has partnered with the State of Michigan, the Detroit Medical Center, and Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority to produce desperately needed psychiatrists for Wayne County and across the State. The program has become the largest in the Midwest and one of the best in the country. This collaboration has led to increases in access to care and innovations in care delivery. In partnership with the Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority, we have begun requiring student rotations in sites throughout the county to better serve the population. We are working with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to expand these rotations into underserved communities throughout the state which do not have access to desperately needed psychiatrists. Finally, through support from the State of Michigan, our psychiatrists have worked with the DMC to reduce crisis inpatient admissions of mental health patients by more than 90 percent, saving the State tens of millions of dollars and significantly improving health outcome of these patients.
- Dr. Sonia Hassan, one of the leading researchers at the Perinatology Research Branch, was handpicked by Mayor Mike Duggan to lead **Make Your Date**, an initiative to combat infant mortality in the city, which is the worst in the country. This program connects pregnant women with doctors who are trained to implement the latest life-saving discoveries and provides services and the support mothers need to obtain timely, high-quality prenatal care. Partners include the City of Detroit, Wayne State University and its Perinatology Research Branch of the NIH, or PRB, Detroit Medical Center, St. John Providence Health System, Henry Ford Health System, Meridian Health Plan, March of Dimes and Yale University. The initiative has been endorsed by the Michigan Section of American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health, the Michigan State Medical Society and the Michigan Department of Community Health. A lot of organizations have mobilized to help some of the most vulnerable citizens of our State.
- Nearly all WSU medical students take part in community outreach programs to enrich their educational experience and live the school's mission of urban clinical excellence. Street Medicine Detroit and The Robert R. Frank Student-Run Free Clinic are two of the most impactful student-run medical programs in the city of Detroit.

- **Street Medicine** is an organization created and run by medical students at WSU. The group delivers health care and related services directly to the city's homeless, who are often service resistant and staying in temporary shelters or living on streets. The students visit the homeless twice a week with social service providers, are supervised by a certified nurse practitioner, and perform basic health procedures such as checking vitals, testing blood glucose levels, answering medical questions and distributing medications as needed. The group's goal is to improve health outcomes and reduce emergency department visits and costs.
- The **Robert R. Frank Student-Run Free Clinic** serves the needs of the medically underserved in Detroit on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon. With the help of Wayne State University School of Medicine and Mercy Primary Care, the student-run free clinic offers a high-quality, primary care resource to the medically uninsured in the city while providing an opportunity for medical students to gain experience in cultural, competent medicine in an atmosphere of mutual respect and dignity.
- In academic year 2014-15, Wayne Law provided more than \$1.3 million of **pro-bono legal services** to 225 clients by students in our 8 legal clinics. Wayne Law's client clinics are directed by full-time expert faculty members and help bridge the gap between theory and practice while providing valuable legal aide to clients in need.
- We all are keenly aware of the situation in Flint, and we, like many people and institutions across the State, have had many people step up to donate, organize and volunteer to help the citizens of Flint. But as a university, we can do more, and we will soon be announcing a partnership to further help address this crisis. A research group, led by Wayne State researchers specializing in environmental engineering and public health, will conduct an independent study evaluating the possible association between changes in Flint's water system and public health, specifically the recent outbreak of Legionnaire's disease. Wayne State is uniquely qualified to lead this investigation given its established relationships, expertise in urban water issues, and existing engineering, public health, and social science expertise. Experts from the university's Urban Watershed Environmental Research Group and the NIH-funded Center for Urban Responses to Environmental Stressors have been actively assisting Flint in the evaluation of drinking water quality. This effort is being led by Dr. Shawn McElmurry, who has been working in Flint for a number of years, most recently serving on Flint's water Technical Advisory Committee. Dr. McElmurry has led multiple sampling campaigns in Flint, and his research confirmed that low levels of chlorine residual may have created conditions that contributed to the outbreak of Legionnaire's disease recently reported. This collaboration includes Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, from Michigan State University's Hurley Medical Center, and Susan Masten, also from Michigan State, as well as others from Wayne State.

These programs and others demonstrate a wide variety of ways Wayne State collaborates to strengthen the assets of the community and State. I mentioned earlier that our most important assets are our people, and for us that starts with our students. The students are our reason for existence, but they are also the future of our State. They are not a homogeneous population.

They are individuals, all of whom deserve a chance to strive toward a better future. At Wayne State, we believe that every student counts, and we're willing to accept students of promise who might need more support to succeed. We think that's right for the students, and we think that's right for Michigan. We need *your* support to make this happen.

Thank you.